WE CLAIM:

1. A method for allocating a resource among subscribers in a system having a first stage and a second stage, the method comprising the steps of:

determining an available capacity in the second stage;

queuing arriving subscribers bidding for an allocation of the resource in the first stage;

periodically admitting at least a portion of the arriving subscribers into the second stage based on respective bid amounts and second stage resource availability;

determining a spot price of the resource based on at least one arrival subscriber not admitted;

offering admitted subscribers a reservation, having a reservation fee, to secure a future allocation of the resource at a given bid price, subscribers accepting the reservation fee being admitted as reserved subscribers, those rejecting the reservation fee being admitted as non-reserved subscribers;

displacing non-reserved subscribers whose bid prices are below the spot price; and

activating a reservation of a reserved subscriber whose bid price is below the spot price.

2. The method for allocating a resource among subscribers as defined by Claim 1, wherein the reservation fee is calculated based on the bid price and a requested duration of the reservation.

3. The method for allocating a resource among subscribers as defined by Claim 2, wherein the reservation fee is inversely proportional to the bid price and directly proportional to the requested duration of the reservation.

4. The method for allocating a resource among subscribers as defined by Claim 2, wherein after a reservation is activated, the subscriber is displaced upon expiration of the duration of the reservation.

5. The method for allocating a resource among subscribers as defined by Claim 1, wherein the spot price of the resource is the highest bid price of the at least one arrival subscriber not admitted.

6. The method for allocating a resource among subscribers as defined by Claim 1, wherein the availability of the resource in the second stage is defined as the total quantity of the resource in the second stage less a reserved quantity of the resource in the second stage.

7. The method for allocating a resource among subscribers as defined by Claim 1, wherein the resource is communication lines in a computer network access system and where the first and second stage each contain a discrete number of communications lines.

8. A network computer server system for controlling a plurality of network access lines to provide subscriber access to a computer network, the server system comprising:

an access line interface for partitioning the plurality of network access lines as first stage lines and second stage lines;

a processor operatively coupled to the access line interface, the processor:

determining an available number of second stage lines;

queuing arriving subscribers bidding for network access in the first stage lines and periodically admitting at least a portion of the arriving subscribers into the second stage lines based on respective bid amounts and the availability of second stage lines;

determining a spot price of the resource based on at least one arrival subscriber not admitted;

determining a reservation fee for secured access to the network for the admitted subscribers to secure future network access at a given bid price;

determining whether a subscriber has accepted the reservation fee and controlling the access line interface to operatively couple that subscriber to the network via a second stage line as a reserved subscriber;

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determining whether a subscriber has rejected the reservation fee and controlling the access line interface to operatively coupled that subscriber to the network via a second stage line as an unreserved subscriber;

controlling the access line interface to disconnect from the network non-reserved subscribers whose bid prices are below the spot price; and

activating a reservation of reserved subscribers whose bid price is below the spot price, and controlling the access line interface to maintain network access for the reserved subscriber for a duration of the reservation; and

a memory device operatively coupled to the processor, the memory device for storing a database of subscriber account data.

9. The network computer server system as defined by claim 8, wherein the processor calculates the reservation fee on the bid amount and a requested duration of the reservation.

10. The network computer server system as defined by claim 8, wherein the reservation fee is inversely proportional to the bid price and directly proportional to the requested duration of the reservation.

11. The network computer server system as defined by claim 8, wherein processor sets the spot price to the highest bid price of the at least one arrival subscriber not admitted.

12. The network computer server system as defined by claim 8, wherein the processor calculates the available number of lines in the second stage as a total number of lines in the second stage less the number of reserved subscribers admitted in the second stage.